

**WILLIAMSBURG PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
2005 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WORK SESSION #5
Monday, March 8, 2004**

A work session of the Williamsburg Planning Commission was held on Monday, March 8, 2004, at 6:30 p.m., in Conference Room 3A, Municipal Building, 401 Lafayette Street.

ATTENDANCE AND CALL TO ORDER

Present were Commissioners Freiling, Young, Friend, Hertzler, Pons and Smith. Commissioners McBeth was absent. Also present was Planning Director Nester and Zoning Administrator Murphy.

Mr. Freiling called the meeting to order.

OPEN FORUM

No one appeared to speak.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Mr. Robert Hershberger, Executive Vice President of the Williamsburg Area Chamber of Commerce discussed Comprehensive Plan issues with the Commission:

- The 1998 Comprehensive Plan was the first to have an Economic Development chapter. The Chamber was involved in the drafting of this chapter, and hopes that something similar can be incorporated into the new Plan.
- The retail/service sector has undergone substantial changes since the 1998 Plan. Retail growth needs to be examined and compared between the City and outlying areas.
- These comments do not represent an official position of the Chamber, but rather personal observations.
- The area between Brooks Street and Monticello Avenue has a potential for development as a unique retail area that could possibly be oriented toward College students.
- The hospital area is critical – office space could be developed that provides services to individual tenants as a way of revitalizing the space.
- Second Street could be a possible location for a business incubator.
- Multifamily development behind Outback could provide affordable housing for service workers.
- Retail/food expansion could take place around Deli Corner.
- Could Economic Development activities be partnered with James City and York Counties?

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- The Chamber would like to look at potential redevelopment areas, review the Economic Development section of the Comprehensive Plan, and look at what is going on in adjoining areas.
- When asked about development possibilities, the Chamber routinely refers people to the three governing bodies, unless they request a specific jurisdiction.

Mr. Hertzler asked about the City's retail "niche." Mr. Hershberger said it depends on who you talk to – perhaps some studies could be done. Possibilities for light industrial development were also discussed.

Mr. Young asked about changes to the goals for Economic Development. Mr. Hershberger said that we need to look at how the travel industry can grow and expand, because it is the economic engine of the City. The Convention and Visitor's Bureau has hired a consultant to look at the travel industry. We should also look at opportunities to bolster the travel industry with non-travel related businesses.

Mr. Freiling observed that we, as a region, can't continue to compete with each other. Williamsburg needs to find the most appropriate niche market. He said that the Plan is a land use document, which can't generate growth and development by itself. Only a cooperative effort can make this a reality.

Mr. Nester reviewed the updated Williamsburg Development Summary, 1975 to 2003. Major points discussed were:

- The City has experienced a slow, steady residential growth over the past 28 years. There have been 1864 dwelling units that will be completed in the 30 years between 1975 and 2005. In addition to these units, an additional 559 units that have been identified by the 1998 Comprehensive Plan can be developed. The City's growth has been and will be significantly lower than the growth in James City and York Counties, as illustrated on the attached chart from the 1998 Comprehensive Plan.
- The majority of the housing built or approved over the past 28 years have been multi-family (duplexes, townhouses, apartments and condominiums): 63% multifamily (1167 units) versus 37% single family detached (697 units).
- Since 1975, only 202 rental apartments have been built, and 104 of these were built by the Williamsburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority. This is 17% of the 1,167 multifamily dwellings that were built since 1975, and 11% of the total dwelling units built since 1975.
- After the construction of existing approved projects is completed by December 2005, future residential growth will be single family detached, based on the 1998 Comprehensive Plan and existing zoning - available land is designated as Low and Medium Density Single Family Detached land. However, there is the possibility of developing larger tracts as Planned Development Residential, which could allow a variety of dwelling unit types if the property is rezoned to PDD.
- The 1998 Comprehensive Plan noted that the City has more than its share of high density residential development, and recommended that no more land be

designated for such development. The Westgate condominiums on Patriot Lane (10.3 units/net acre) and Bristol Commons condominiums on Ironbound Road (13.2 units/net acre) are the last high density projects that were built (>8 units/net acre). The proposed Parkway Condominiums, now under review, were conditionally rezoned to RM-2 in 2003. Other than this project, there is no properly zoned land left in the City for large high density residential projects. This is an issue that will be discussed during the update of the 1998 Comprehensive Plan.

- The City's population projection in the 1998 Comprehensive Plan for 2020 is 15,020. The 1990 Census population was 11,998. The state estimate for 2003 is 12,600. We estimate that 727 dwelling units that have been or are being built were not included in the 2000 Census figures. These units, plus the 559 additional dwelling units identified by the 1998 Comprehensive Plan will add a total of 1,286 units. Based on a family size of 2 persons per household, 2,572 people could be added to the City in the next 10 to 20 years from the 2000 Census, bring the City's population to approximately 14,570. This is based upon the land uses identified in the 1998 Comprehensive Plan, and changes during the Plan update could change the potential for future population growth in the City.
- The City experienced hotel expansion between 1975 and 1987, with 1,677 new rooms constructed (46 rooms were demolished, for a **net gain of 1631 hotel rooms between 1975 and 1987**). Hotel construction ceased from 1988 to 1995. Between 1996 and 2003, 913 new rooms were constructed or approved (608 rooms were or are proposed to be demolished or converted, for a **net gain of 305 hotel rooms between 1996 and 1999**). The majority of demolition and conversion of hotel rooms was accomplished since 1996, with 608 rooms eliminated (93% of the total demolished or converted since 1975). There were 913 new rooms constructed since 1996 as the City's room supply was modernized and upgraded.
- The construction of new restaurants has been steady over the past 28 years, with an average of one new restaurant being added each year. Fifteen (48%) of the 31 new restaurant buildings were for local restaurants, with 16 (52%) national franchises. However, eight of the 12 restaurants approved in the past 10 years have been national franchises. The City now has 83 restaurants, and the new restaurant buildings added over the past 25 years make up 37% of the total. In 1990 there were 72 restaurants, and the current total of 83 represents a **net gain of 11 restaurants between 1990 and 2003**.
- With the limited amount of land available for commercial and economic development uses (both for new development and redevelopment), it is essential for the continued economic health of the City that quality development and redevelopment be encouraged.

OPEN FORUM

Terry Durbin, 101 Bristol Commons, suggested giving more thought to developing affordable single family housing, and applauded the City for its rental inspection program.

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Nanci Bond, 416 Suri Drive, said that the City needs to develop carrots and sticks to encourage redevelopment – incentives to upgrade, disincentives to letting the property declined.

OTHER

There was a general discussion of the format of work sessions and outreach meetings. Mr. Pons said that the meetings needed more form. Mr. Freiling suggested contacting Joe McCleary for insights about the James City County Comprehensive Plan process.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Paul Freiling, Chairman
Williamsburg Planning Commission